

Function 270: Energy

Function 270 comprises energy-related programs including research and development (R&D), energy conservation, environmental clean-up, and rural utility loans. Most of the programs are within the Department of Energy (DOE), although the rural utilities program is part of the Department of Agriculture.

The conference agreement on the Republican budget resolution provides \$3.0 billion in discretionary funding for Function 270. This represents a \$100 million (2.3 percent) cut in purchasing power for 2001 and a stunning \$900 million (29.2 percent) cut for 2002, and continued cuts through 2005. At a time when the nation is facing rising gasoline prices and suffering from our dependence on imported oil, the conference agreement actually decreases funding for energy research and conservation programs after 2001, cutting purchasing power for 2002 by almost one-third compared with the 2000 level.

- **Comparison with House Resolution** — For Function 270 appropriations, the conference agreement provides \$200 million more than the House resolution for 2001, but for 2002, it provides \$500 million less than the House resolution. Over five years (2001-2005), the conference agreement provides \$900 million more than the House resolution.
- **Comparison with Democratic Alternative Resolution** — The conference agreement provides \$3.7 billion (21.3 percent) less than the Democratic alternative resolution over five years (2001-2005).
- **Energy Supply R&D** — The conference agreement is silent about how much it cuts specific programs. However, assuming an across-the-board cut in Function 270 means that the conference agreement decreases purchasing power for applied energy R&D by \$195 million for 2002.
- **Fossil Energy R&D** — Assuming an across-the-board cut, the conference agreement decreases purchasing power for 2002 by \$127 million for programs that help industry develop ways to produce and use coal, oil, and gas resources more efficiently.
- **Nuclear Waste Disposal** — The Department of Energy uses nuclear waste disposal funding to help find a permanent method to dispose of its high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel. Under an across-the-board cut, the conference agreement cuts purchasing power for these programs by \$72 million for 2002.